

## Is NA different from NAA?

Paweł Rutkowski  
University of Warsaw

This paper focuses on the syntax of postnominal adjectives in Polish. When postposed, Polish adjectives typically receive a classifying interpretation, in other words, they indicate a type/category that the denoted entity belongs to, cf. (1a). This makes them different from regular prenominal adjectives, whose function is purely descriptive, cf. (1b). Rutkowski and Progovac (2005) and Rutkowski (2007) propose that the postnominal location of the classifying adjective in (1a) results from N-raising: the noun moves from N to the head of a higher functional projection, located immediately above NP. According to this analysis, the postnominal classifying modifier is merged in SpecNP, which is considered a non-iterative position. Therefore, classifying adjectives do not allow recursion: only structures such as NA, and not NAA, may be derived by this N-raising operation:

[DP D ... [FP Ni [NP ClassifyingA ti ]]]

Cetnarowska, Pysz and Trugman (2011) argue against the above account because, according to them, the number of postnominal adjectives is not restricted in Polish. They base their argumentation on examples such as (2-3), with two or more adjectives following the head noun.

I argue that the structures illustrated in (1a), on the one hand, and (2-3), on the other, cannot be derived by the same mechanism: the NA construction results from a very productive and stylistically unmarked syntactic operation (N-raising), whereas structures with more than one adjective in postposition can be merged only by placing the additional adjective(s) in a reduced relative clause. Therefore, it could be expected that native speakers of Polish should find the latter as essentially different (e.g. less productive) from the former. Since Cetnarowska, Pysz and Trugman's (2011) criticism of Rutkowski and Progovac's (2005) model hinges on the grammaticality status of structures such as (2-3), it seems crucial to establish whether phrases of the NAA(A) type are indeed perceived as different from those with only one adjective following the noun.

The present paper attempts to shed new light on the above problem by providing relevant empirical data. I have carried out a questionnaire investigation, designed to test the acceptance of structures such as (2-3) by native speakers of Polish. I asked 100 adult informants to assess the naturalness of test sentences such as (4a-c). The informants were asked to use a 4-point scale: "fully natural", "rather natural", "rather strange" and "very strange". The questionnaire judgements were then graded on a scale ranging from 0 to -3 (0 for "fully natural", -1 for "rather natural", -2 for "rather strange" and -3 for "very strange"). Therefore, the mean score for a sentence judged perfectly natural by all informants would be 0.000, whereas the mean score for an example judged very unnatural would be -3.000. The results show very clear tendencies, as illustrated in Table 1.

In the present paper, I discuss the questionnaire results in detail and conclude that the level of acceptability of structures such as (2-3) is very low. I further argue that the NAA(A) structure is only marginally possible in a very limited context, namely that of labels and product names. Interestingly, the postnominal placement of adjectives in this context is attested also in languages that do not have a productive NA structure comparable to the Polish one shown (1a). I discuss this cross-linguistic observation on the basis of data from Lithuanian.